

COUNTRYEgypt

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SUBJECTClandestine Arms Traffickers, Cairo

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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.



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1. It is stated that the three Halbuni brothers: Fahmi, Hamdi, and Chafik, who are partners in a wholesale cotton goods, tea and spice business, are engaged in clandestine arms traffic. They have an office at #2 Hoche Issa and a store at #24 Sharia Khan Abou-Takia, Cairo. Fahmi lives at #8 Sharia Masbad al Shams; Hamdi, at #12 Sharia Alexandre le Grand; Chafik, at 26 Sharia Said; all addresses are in Heliopolis.
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2. The Halbunis are wealthy Syrians with many business connections with firms and individuals in Syria, Lebanon and Palestine. The daughter of the eldest brother (Chafik?) is married to Qaimmaqam (Colonel) Muhammad Yusuf Bey, an officer in the Cairo city police. The latter has been previously reported [REDACTED] as the officer in charge of the "Arab Affairs Office" of the Cairo police. He is now alleged to use his official position to put pressure upon those whom he knows to be traffickers in contraband arms to work through the agency of his father-in-law. For this he supposedly receives generous financial rewards.
3. The two principal suppliers of arms for clandestine sale are reported to be a certain Cherbini and a certain Husayn Hegab. The latter is reported to be an erstwhile inspector of the Political Section of the Ministry of the Interior, who has made large profits by selling arms to both sides in the Palestine struggle and also to the Bedouins of Egypt. The bulk of these arms have come from the Western desert where Halbuni was able to obtain a contract from the British authorities for the recovery of material from old battlefields.
4. Interesting in the light of the Egyptian Government's lately reported attempts to keep arms out of the hands of possible opponents is the report that Chafik Halbuni and Muhammad Yusuf Bey are both friends of Wafdist opposition leader Mustafa Nahhas Pasha. For obvious reasons of policy, contacts between them are kept sub rosa. Thus, Yusuf and Halbuni have been able to remain on good terms with the Palace, despite the bitter enmity between it and Nahhas.